

For Immediate Release



★★ **ERIK** ★★
BRANDT
of The Urban Hillbilly Quartet

ERIK BRANDT TO RELEASE *FOLKSINGER*

Urban Hillbilly Quartet Front Man to Deliver First New Collection of Songs Since 2012

Saint Paul, MN— [Erik Brandt](#), a Twin Cities-based multi-instrumentalist and singer known for his work as the frontman for The Urban Hillbilly Quartet (UHQ) will release his fourth solo album, *Folksinger*, on February 27. Since 1995, Brandt and UHQ have released eleven albums and toured most of the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom. For **Folksinger** (UHQ Recordings, 2025), he enlisted the help of AJ Scheiber (Wilkinson James) to produce and shepherd the recording project.

“I feel like the luckiest guy on the planet,” said Brandt, “I turned my home into a professional recording studio and had many of my oldest musical friends come help me breathe life into this batch of songs. I even got friends in NYC, Kansas, Texas, and Hungary to contribute additional parts. AJ, my producer, helped me listen to the Muse again and find a way to bring a number of these songs to completion. I wasn’t sure I’d ever make another album and, now, here it is!”

The result is Brandt’s most cohesive and fully realized work to date from a veteran songwriter. The ten tracks cover a wide swath of music—from country to rock to ska to jazz and folk—but share a unifying thematic connection. Many musicians came together to make this album possible -- in particular, the contributions of the UHQ’s Jeremy Szopinski (electric baritone guitar) and Dave Strahan (drums, pedal steel, electric guitar), along with AJ Scheiber (bass, pedal steel, guitar), percussion parts by Chris Stromquist (NYC based touring drummer), woodwinds by Paul Fonfara (The Brass Messengers, DeVotchKa), and harmonies from a cast of friends, including Luke Jacobs & Carrie Rodriguez, Doug Trail-Johnson (House of Mercy Band), and Ági Mohácsy (Hungary).

Brandt’s many musical influences shine on this solo recording. The title track “Folksinger” merges heartfelt lyrics with pedal steel and electric baritone guitar. “Size of Diamonds” and “Cruel Spring” create vivid images of troubled protagonists set to REM-esque rock and Mavericks-like ska, respectively. The swinging sax, clarinet, and accordion of “Play Side B” tell the joyful story of someone learning to celebrate life post-50. “Bike Ride to your Heart” is a song Brandt originally started in the mid-90s that took until now to finally arrive at its destination with Beach Boys-like harmonies and grooving percussion. “Weary Traveler,” with lush acoustic guitar and piano, and the mesmerizing harmony vocals of Hungarian singer Ági Mohácsy, brings the album to a close by commemorating Erik’s friends, Soren and Jim Kasperson.

With The UHQ and on his own, Brandt has performed at venues from California to New York City, and from pubs in Great Britain to clubs in Australia. In Minnesota, he has appeared at clubs, theaters and premier events. The UHQ has released nine albums, picking up a Minnesota Music Award (and several nominations), as well as many glowing reviews along the way. Brandt’s 2006 solo debut, *Green Eyed Alone*, drew praise from critics and fans. The *Pioneer Press* called it a “warm and engaging disc” and his 2009 follow up, *Sometimes*, was called “a diamond in the rough, well-crafted, richly romantic, Jayhawks-evoking country-folk recorded with loving clarity...” by the *Minneapolis Star Tribune*. His 2012 recording, *The Long*

Winter, was called “a true tour de force with ingenious, eclectic originality, some of strongest songwriting you’re likely to ever come across” by the TCDailyPlanet.

For more information, please visit www.ErikBrandt.com

Upcoming Shows:

2/27: St. Paul, MN @ Celtic Junction Arts Center: *Album Release Concert:*

Friday 27 February 2026 – Celtic Junction Arts Center

836 Prior Ave N / St. Paul, MN 55104 / 612-722-7000

<https://celticjunction.org/>

7:00. \$20 – price includes a copy of the album. Under 18 free! All-ages.

3/13: Madison, WI @ Harmony Bar

3/14: Milwaukee, WI @ Falcon Bowl

Folksinger National Street Date: 16 December 2025

Album available at Bandcamp (*preferred*), iTunes, Apple Music, and all streaming services.

Album Information – All songs FCC Clean. * *recommended tracks*

Side A

1. Folksinger 3:09
2. STP 2:28
3. Size of Diamonds 3:41 *
4. Once Upon a Time 2:42
5. Narcissus 2:55

Side B

6. Play Side B 3:33 *
7. Bike Ride to your Heart 2:26
8. Cruel Spring 3:29 *
9. Until the End 3:11
10. Weary Traveler 3:48 (*in memory of Soren and Jim Kasperson*)

Musicians:

Erik Brandt: vocals, guitar, accordion, piano

Paul Fonfara: clarinet, tenor sax, bass clarinet

Luke Jacobs & Carrie Rodriguez: harmony vocals (Cruel Spring)

Peter Karman: banjo (Folksinger)

Ági Mohácsy: harmony vocals (Folksinger and Weary Traveler)

Rick Risch: harmony vocals (Bike Ride to your Heart)

AJ Scheiber: electric bass, pedal steel, acoustic guitar

Dave Strahan: drums, pedal steel, electric guitar

Chris Stromquist: all percussion

Jeremy Szopinski: electric baritone guitar, electric guitar

Doug Trail-Johnson: harmony vocals, mandolin

- All songs written by Erik Brandt, © 2025 Erik Brandt Music
- Produced by AJ Scheiber and Erik Brandt
- Recorded and mixed by Peter Rasmussen at St. Paul Sound, MN
- Additional recording by Luke Jacobs (Perfecto Creative, Austin, TX), Peter Karman (Shoebox Studios, Lawrence, KS), Tibor Kiss (Delfin Hangstudió, Hungary), and Chris Stromquist (C1 Studios, Brooklyn, NY).
- Mastered by Greg Reiersen at RareForm Mastering
- Design by Christopher Kornmann at Spit + Image
- Album art: *Particles* #13 by Jeremy Szopinski

Discography / Recordings

1997: *Living in The City* (Fundamental/Hymn 13) – Urban Hillbilly Quartet

1998: *St. Paul Town* (Fundamental/Hymn 16) – Urban Hillbilly Quartet

1999: *Beautiful Lazy* (Fundamental/Hymn 19/TrueTunes Records) – Urban Hillbilly Quartet

2000: *Lanky But Macho* (Independent) – Urban Hillbilly Quartet
2001: *Hot and Now* (Bert Records) – Urban Hillbilly Quartet
2002: *Amelia's Boot* (Fundamental 1 A.D.) – Erik Brandt and the Urban Hillbilly Quartet
2003: *The A-List* (Fundamental 2 A.D.) – Urban Hillbilly Quartet
2006: *Green Eyed Alone* (Mercy Recordings) – Erik Brandt (solo album)
2008: *Bring in the Sails* (Mercy Recordings) – Urban Hillbilly Quartet
2009: *Sometimes* (Mercy Recordings) – Erik Brandt (solo album)
2012: *The Long Winter* (House of Mercy Recordings) – Erik Brandt (solo album)
2019: *South of Dark* (House of Mercy Recordings) – Erik Brandt and the Urban Hillbilly Quartet
2025: *Folksinger* (UHQ Records) – Erik Brandt (solo album)

Publicity:

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